



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

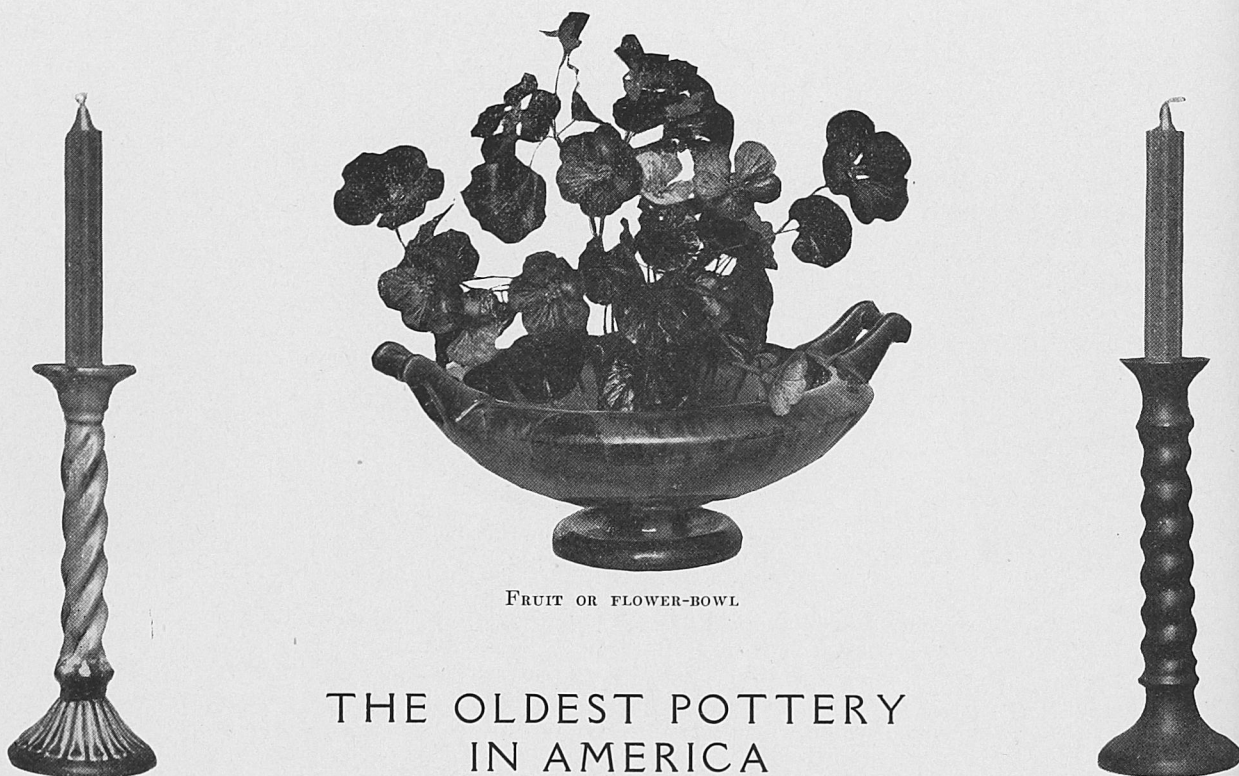
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



FRUIT OR FLOWER-BOWL

THE OLDEST POTTERY IN AMERICA

Illustrated by Examples of Fulper Pottery

ON the mountainous island of Fayal, one of the Azores' group, the natives have from time immemorial fashioned by hand from the common red clay of that region pieces of pottery which were perfect in form and alluring, by reason of their antique shapes. They were of a rich red color, but were unglazed and porous, and therefore could serve no really useful purpose in that state, beyond being picked up later on by tourists as souvenirs of travel. These were among the early forms of an art which reaches far back into ancient history, and which is to-day practised by moderns with wonderful results.

Pottery always had and still has a human interest and no amount of study and experiment has been spared to reach perfection in this most ancient of arts. The potter still works at his wheel, but he has learned the wonders of firing his handiwork, and has found that Mother Nature, after all, must be the one to put the last note of color on the thing he produces.

Grandmother's cooky jar, over a hundred years old, has now an interest something beyond that which was felt when we first made its acquaintance. Then it was to us a container of good things only; now, we look at it with reverence, wondering who moulded it in its almost classic form, and who gave it the rich mahogany glaze, leaving a base of dull unglazed brick-red. It is a little lopsided, but that perhaps was the potter's fault, we can not say,

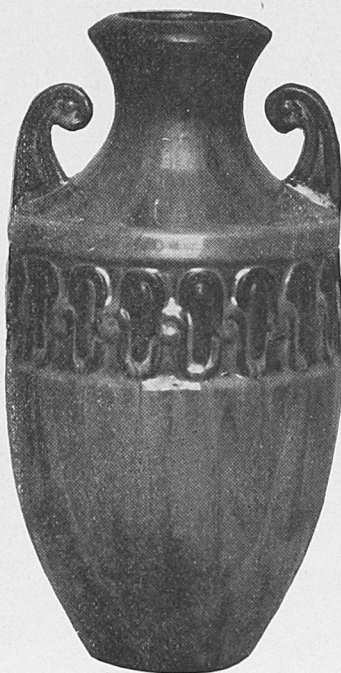
yet, somehow, that very departure from a true curve, endears it to us as the handiwork of some early craftsman.

Over the river in Flemington, New Jersey, stands the Fulper Pottery, the oldest pottery in the United States, dating back in its industry to 1805. At first there were manufactured there crude pieces of red earthenware, field-tiles and salt-glazed crockery. It is interesting to know that in the designing-room to-day there are the original old hand-hewn timbers supporting the roof, with the marks of the axe still on them, and the wooden pegs, with which the structural parts were first fastened in place, are yet doing valiant service.

In 1805 our people were thinking little about anything beyond producing the necessities of life. Bowls and jars were made, to be sure, but they were for usefulness rather than beauty. There was little time for culture in those days, but with a new freedom came the desire for things beautiful as well as useful, and so the Fulper Pottery, which began by fashioning crude necessities, following by successive stages the needs of the people, came at last to its present important place in the world of Ceramic art.

The Fulper pottery of to-day is very beautiful in finish and color, and it is to be regretted that its outlines only can be reproduced in the black and white illustrations which are here shown.

Perhaps its greatest merit lies in the fact that it is, first of all,



substantial and sturdy, something to be used freely in every-day life, and not set apart as too perishable to enjoy. No two pieces are quite alike, and this is its chief fascination. The very uncertainty of what the firing will produce gives it a constantly renewed interest. Whatever dream of color the potter may have had in fashioning a piece, he can not be quite sure about it, since Nature herself must take a hand in bringing it to perfection, and having brought it through the fire, he will recognize and love her handiwork.

Impure clays are employed, that is, clays in which the native mixture of minerals have not been too much disturbed, and there is but one firing, so that body and glaze are subject to one fierce and final heat. The clay and the glaze interchange, as it were, their personal properties, and so from the same firing come pieces of uniform outline but widely different in markings and coloring.

Nature is a fitful artist, producing always the unexpected, and so you may examine one piece after another of the Fulper pottery, only to find no one just like another, but all fascinating in color and design. Thus much for the new so-called Vasekraft which is here represented, and which is thus described by Evelyn Marie Stewart, a well-known authority on the household arts:

"In this new pottery, known as Vasekraft, we

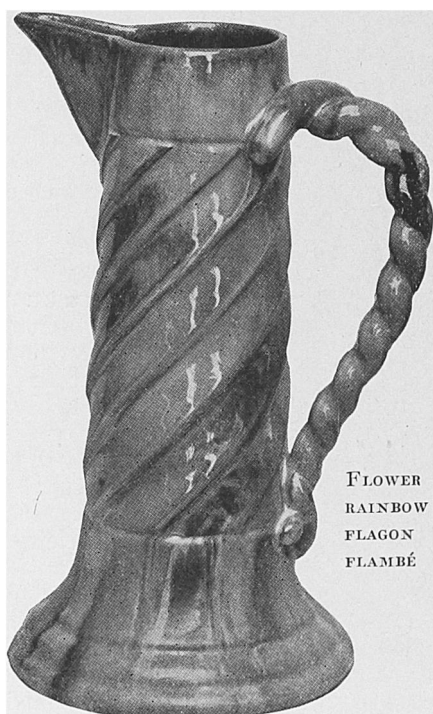
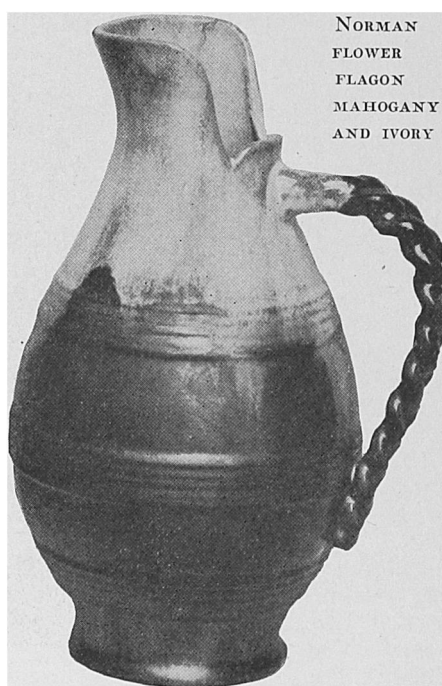


SHELL-BOWL

have come into something rich and brilliant, vibrant with splendid color, yet so mellow of tone and so graceful of line as to seem restrained and restful. It is the ideal of pottery, having gained in beauty from its frank expression of its origin, for, of all ornamental glazed ware, this is perhaps the most truly eloquent of the soil, without a trace of the artificiality of china or porcelain. It is most purely pottery, molded in lines made classic in clay and adorned only by its rich glazes in patterns traced by the fingers of fire.

It is difficult to describe the beauties of Vasekraft because they are as various as a series of mountain sunsets or the everchanging hues and undulations of the sea. There are wonderful velvety wistaria tones, ripe and ashen with bloom like the surface of a plum; brilliant yellows; mirror blues as rich as lapis lazuli; dull chocolates with a soft metallic gleam; cucumber greens and browns, spotted and mottled with crystal; combinations of color that rival the butterfly's wings or the exotic hues of the luxurious orchid.

Then there is a wonderful *sang de boeuf* as rich as any ever achieved by the potters of the Celestial Empire, and a marvelous little group of famille-rose pieces in perfect old Chinese forms. These latter are the treasures of the potter, held above price by their loving creator.

FLOWER
RAINBOW
FLAGON
FLAMBÉNORMAN
FLOWER
FLAGON
MAHOGANY
AND IVORY